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she drew near he greeted her and wished her the peace of God and His blessing. And Salma drew her veil across her face and she averted her eyes and she did not reply to the greeting of the strange youth. Then Kadhim drew level with her and he bent his head towards her and whispered: Did it hurt much when they tattooed the butterfly? When Salma heard these words her face grew red with shame. But she looked at Kadhim's face and saw that he was laughing, so she, too, laughed, and she dropped her veil and said: Since you have seen the butterfly you may as well see my face.

Then Kadhim and Salma sat down by a tamarisk bush, and he told her his name and situation and she told him her name and details of her life, and they laughed much about the butterfly and she said: It did not hurt, for it was done when I was in the fifth year of my life, and it was only a little one, but it has grown larger with me. And they discovered that they were of one heart.

Each day and every day that Salma went to draw water from the river Kadhim waited for her, and he helped her fill the jar with water, and they would sit down by a tamarisk bush and pass a few minutes in laughter and happiness. And when Salma returned to her house her eyes were like stars and her cheeks were like the blossoms of the rose. And the mother of Salma said to her husband, the merchant Abdul Rashid: See how happy our daughter is? What can cause this happiness? And Abdul Rashid said: She needs a husband. Perhaps she is falling in love. I will see the marriage broker today.

So that very day, when he had closed his shop, Abdul Rashid went to the house of that discreet man, the marriage broker, and he said: My daughter is of an age to marry. And the broker said: There is one who seeks a

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bride of fifteen or sixteen years, and he is Abbas Ali el Qassab, that wealthy merchant. His shop is said to be worth three thousand gold liras. And the matter was discussed and the broker passed much between the two merchants, and all was ready for a formal proposal. And Abdul Rashid Mejid said: First I will ask the mother of the girl and the girl, for this matter affects them. Then let matters take a formal course.

Abdul Rashid Mejid went back to his house, and his daughter and his wife brought him food. And when he had eaten of the food he said: There is good news for our little Salma. I will arrange for her to marry Abbas Ali el Qassab, so that she can live in a fine house and have servants of her own, nor shall she have to draw water or soil her hands with cooking, and she will be too grand to come and see her poor parents.

But Salma started crying and sobbing and she said: Abbas Ali has no front teeth and he dyes his beard and water runs always from his nose in the manner that it drips from the fronds of the palm trees when it rains. And she flung herself on the ground and her body was racked with sobs. And her mother said to her father: Don't worry, I will talk her round. I was like this when they told me I had to marry you.

Next morning at dawn Salma ran to the river and Kadhim took her in his arms, for she was sobbing and trembling like a tent in the wind. And she related to Kadhim what had passed between her and her father. And he asked: What price does your father want for you? And she replied: Eighty gold liras.

Then Kadhim said to the girl Salma: Do not weep and do not fear, for on the day that Abbas Ali el Qassab puts on his sword and mounts his horse to ride in procession to

X539 ONCE, in the days when the Turks ruled Iraq, there was a coppersmith of Basra, and Khalid was his name. He was born in Nasiriya, and lived there until the sixteenth year of his life. Then, when his father died, he took his mother and went to Basra and he worked as a coppersmith in the bazaar of Umm el Brum, that he might earn enough with which to live. Now, the amount he earned each month from the owner of the coppershop was only enough for food and rent and clothes for his mother and himself, nor could he save money enough to buy a shop of his own or to marry a wife. And Khalid and his mother lived in a poor house, and she did the cooking and all the work of the house was in her hands.

X539 581 There came a day that the mother of Khalid fell sick and died and he was left alone in the house, nor was there anyone to do the cooking and the work of the house. As for Khalid, he had to go to work from the rising of the sun until its setting, so he could not go to the bazaar to buy vegetables and meat, nor could he cook his food. He therefore thought: Since I do not earn enough to keep a servant it is necessary that I marry a wife, and this course I would surely take if I had the money, since it is incumbent on a man to take to himself a wife. But since I have little money, let me seek out one who is less desired by men for some reason, that she may be cheap, and though she may not be perfect in all the requirements of a wife, she will at least buy the supplies from the market and cook them and clean the house.

X539 ●584 581 Then Khalid sent for a wise woman who acted as a go-between for those about to marry, and he said to her: Know you that my income is small and my capital is none and I desire to marry a wife. Therefore seek out one whose

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father will not require of me more than one gold lira, and if she is lame or has only one eye, it matters not, but let her be able to cook. And the wise woman replied and said: I already know of such a one. Her father requires only a date stone. She is perfect in figure and in her face she has the beauty of the moon, she can recite poetry, and as for her cooking, verily it is said that there is a commotion in the heavens, for it is necessary to restrain the angels that they come not down to partake of it whenever she cooks a dish.

Khalid then said to the wise woman: If she be indeed as you say, then why the date stone? Perchance her name is dishonoured and such a one I do not want. But the woman said: If she be not a virgin, then return her to her father. Verily she is honourable, and as for the reason for the date stone, let it be known to you that this girl has the temper of a fiery steed, and her father has recently taken a wife of the same age as this girl, and she beats and torments the new wife of her father without mercy, nor is there peace in his house. Therefore he will give her to you in marriage and her name is Khalila. But she needs a firm hand on the reins. Khalid was happy that he should get a wife beautiful in face and figure, so he said to the wise woman: It shall be as you say. I shall marry this girl, and I shall control her, nor can her temper matter to me, for I am a man, and she is but a woman.

And so the arrangements were made and a day came on which Khalid sat in his house and his friends went and brought the girl Khalila to him and he took her in marriage. And Khalid's heart was filled with joy, for he found that the girl was beautiful of face and beautiful of figure and he spent the night in the delights and joy of matrimony, and he was happy and thought: I am only a poor

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to slaughter ten sheep every day to feed the poor, but now the old sheikh lives there with his only daughter, without any servant or slave, nor does anybody else go in, nor does anybody else come out.

And Jassim thought and pondered, and he said to himself: Qurnachi is a great name. I would be unwise to meddle with that girl, for her father would surely kill me. Rather should I take a better course. Why should I not marry her? Then not only could I enjoy her beauty without fear, but I could also remark to my friends in the coffee-house: My latest wife is a model housekeeper. Of course, you know she is a Qurnachi. And then they will eye me with the eye of respect and my sons will mingle with those of noble blood, and since the sheikh is so poor I will offer him a handsome price and he will accept.

So on the next day Jassim the merchant called at the house of Sheikh Mizeil el Qurnachi, and he knocked on the great door, for he was not acquainted with that conduct which is seemly. And Sheikh Mizeil opened the door himself and bade him welcome and entrance, for the Sheikh was a true Arab. And he said to him: I am honoured by your visit, respected merchant, but pardon me for the poorness of your reception, for I gave all my servants and staff permission to go to their homes and take a day's rest. Nor have I anyone here to prepare for you food or coffee, so pardon my rudeness, and pray tell me your name and your business with speed, that you may not linger in discomfort.

And Jassim replied, and his reply was an abrupt reply, lacking in dignity and form, and he said: Noble sheikh, as for my name, it is Jassim Kuweity, and I own the great cloth shop. And as for my business, it is marriage, for I hear you have a daughter, and as for the sum, I will pay

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one hundred thousand gold liras. Sheikh Mizeil was amazed at the words of the merchant and his face went black, and he said: You have lost your way. Are you looking for a brothel? I know your name and I have heard of you. Is it not said that your grandfather sold milk? Does then the vulture mate with the peacock? Were you other than a donkey's droppings you would not live after making this suggestion. As it is, I will give you a lesson in respect even as it is taught to slaves.

And Sheikh Mizeil seized Jassim in a grip of iron and he commenced beating the merchant about the head and ears with his riding-switch until the blood flowed. And when Sheikh Mizeil was satisfied with beating Jassim he took him and cast him out into the dust. And Nura saw these events from a window of the inner courtyard, and she was amazed, thinking: Was not that the merchant from whom I bought the sequins? How then did he know our house? Then Nura, for she was a clever girl, remembered that the bag of sequins had been half empty on her arrival, and she looked out of the door and saw that the threshold was still sprinkled with sequins, and she thought: This was the stratagem of the lustful merchant.

And as for Jassim, he picked himself up from the dusty street and walked back to his shop, and his heart was full of anger and the desire for revenge. And he pondered: How can I bring this old maniac to ruin, he who has dared to treat me in this manner, he who has not even enough copper coins to put together to make a pair? And he returned to his shop and he went to his treasure chest and he opened it and he counted out ten thousand gold liras. He put the coins in a handkerchief of the finest silk, and he left his shop and he went to the house of the Turkish pasha, Commandant of Police, and he entered

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THE youth sees a girl on the road or in the fields, for the women of the tribes are not veiled, and he falls in love with her. He speaks to his mother, or if he has no mother, to his sister or his aunt, and she goes to the house of the girl and she sees any of the women of the house, but preferably she sees the mother of the girl. And she asks: Does your daughter agree to marry So-and-so? And the mother asks the girl and a reply is given.

If the reply is favourable the youth goes to his sheikh, or if his sheikh is away to one of the sons of his sheikh, and if there are no sons available he goes to a sayyid and he says: O Your Honour the Sheikh, I want to marry the daughter of So-and-so, for I love her and I want her and I cannot live without her. And will you be an intermediary in the affair? The sheikh usually agrees, for the man is of his tribe. Then the sheikh will send one of his servants to the father of the girl, and the servant will say: The sheikh wishes to visit you at such and such a time.

At that time the father of the girl remains ready in his house, and he has prepared a meal for the sheikh and for his retainers. The sheikh arrives in his car, and he is accompanied by three or four men to support his dignity. And the sheikh sits down in the house and he converses with the father of the girl for half an hour, but he does not mention the marriage. Then they have food, and after the meal the sheikh sits for a while and then he says: We must take our leave and go. And the father of the girl says: You have honoured me with a visit, and there must be some reason for it. Command me as to what service I can do. And the sheikh says: Let it be known to you that the business of our visit is marriage. And the sheikh continues and asks: Do you consent to the marriage of your daughter to So-and-so, and surely you must give your consent?

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The father of the girl says: Let me ask the women of the house for I cannot compel them if they do not agree. And if the reply comes back that the women of the house agree, the sheikh says: How much do you ask of us? And the man replies: Give according to your pleasure. The sheikh says: No, you must name the sum. And the man says: One hundred dinars. 584

The next day the father of the youth, or if he has no father, one of his male relatives, takes the hundred dinars and he goes to the father of the girl and he gives him the hundred dinars. And when the father of the youth has gone, the father of the girl gives the money to the mother of the girl, and the mother goes out and buys a gold necklace, gold earrings, gold bangles and silver anklets for the girl, also clothes and shoes. 585 201

Then between three and ten days after the payment of the money, at the time of sunset, the bridegroom sits in his house to await his bride, and he sends all his female relatives to bring her to him. His mother and his grandmother and his sisters and his aunts march in procession with a band to the house of the bride, and they are escorted by all the friends of the bridegroom belonging to the tribe, armed with their revolvers and rifles, and there should be fifty armed men in the procession for a fashionable wedding. 585

When the procession reaches the house of the bride the men fire their rifles, and the bride, who is ready, comes out, accompanied by her female relations, and her male relations sit quietly in their house and they do not come out. Then the bride goes back in procession to the house of the groom, surrounded by the female relations of the groom.

When the procession reaches the bridegroom's house